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THE EMPLOYMENT OF PH.D.'S IN ENGLISH: 1981-82

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TO PROVIDE the profession with reliable statistics on the placement of doctorates in English, the MLA and ADE began in 1977 to survey departments granting the Ph.D. and D.A. in English. The survey was taken each year until 1981, when it was suspended at the recommendation of the MLA's Committee on Careers, which urged that it be taken biennially beginning in 1982. Response to the surveys has always been at or near the 100% level; all of the 145 departments that grant the doctorate responded to the 1981-82 survey.

An overview of the survey results appears below as Table 1. A comparison of results for the five surveys taken since 1977 appears as Table 2. The most interesting findings are the following:

1. In 1981-82, 817 Ph.D.'s in English were granted, 25.3% fewer than the number reported in 1976-77 (1,094).

2. The ratio of men and women receiving Ph.D.'s has changed significantly. In 1976-77, 600 men and 494 women received the doctorate in English; in 1981-82, 376 men and 441 women. The ratio of men to women has nearly reversed, from 55:45 in 1976-77 to 46:54 in 1981-82.

3. The rate at which Ph.D.'s were hired for full-time academic positions, temporary or tenure-track, has declined only slightly since 1976-77. In that year, the rate was 61.2%; in 1981-82, it was 59.7%.

4. The percentage of Ph.D.'s hired into tenure-track positions has also declined only slightly, from 42.6% in 1976-77 to 39.2% in 1981-82.

5. Men obtained 49.2% of the full-time academic placements in 1981-82 while holding 46.0% of the total group of doctorates.

6. The proportion of Ph.D.'s who found employment outside of teaching was larger than in 1976-77: 15.7% in 1981-82, compared with 9.1% in 1976-77. Conversely, the percentage unemployed in 1976-77 was significantly higher than in the most recent survey: 10.2% in 1976-77, 4.7% in 1981-82.

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Table 1: Placement of Ph.D.'s in English, 1981-82

	Men	Women	Total
Doctorates granted	376	441	817
Tenure-track appointments	162	158	320
Renewable non-tenure-track appointments	43	66	109
Nonrenewable appointments (1 year or less)	35	24	59
Full-time appointments as % of all Ph.D.'s granted	63.8%	56.2%	59.7%
Part-time appointments	32	49	81
Postdoctoral fellowships	2	5	7
Teaching or administration in secondary schools	16	18	34
Positions in higher education administration	8	15	23
Positions in government	5	3	8
Positions in nonprofit organizations	4	7	11
Positions in business	24	28	52
Unemployed, seeking academic position in specific geographic area	7	16	23
Seeking academic position anywhere	8	7	15
Unknown or other	30	45	75
Employed Ph.D.'s as % of all Ph.D.'s granted	88.0%	84.6%	86.2%

Table 2: Selected Data on the Placement of Ph.D.'s in English in Five Successive Surveys

	1976-77	1977-78	1978-79	1979-80	1981-82
Total no. of Ph.D.'s awarded	1,094	1,110	955	928	817
Total no. of full-time academic appointments					
No. (% of total)	669 (61.2)	710 (64.0)	569 (59.6)	576 (62.1)	488 (59.7)
Full-time tenure-track appointments					
No. (% of total)	466 (42.6)	481 (43.3)	391 (40.9)	379 (40.8)	320 (39.2)
Employment other than college teaching					
No. (% of total)	100 (9.1)	114 (10.2)	148 (15.5)	120 (12.9)	128 (15.7)
Unemployed					
No. (% of total)	112 (10.2)	72 (6.5)	46 (4.8)	43 (4.6)	38 (4.7)